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ABSTRACT

The problems facing implementation of a sound inservice program are examined from diverse viewpoints. Selective samples from policy papers by relevant educational institutions and organizations are analyzed. These papers present some consensus and some conflicting perceptions on the issues of shared governance, program content, resource allocations, and mode of delivery of materials. Composite characteristics of successful inservice projects are identified. Such projects should have revolutionary change goals and a committed continuous project staff management. Support from central and school administration as well as involved teachers are of primary importance to an inservice program. Finally, the program should be conducted on site, encouraging participants to develop, implement, and evaluate the program. Emphasis is placed on the need for collaborative leadership from educational institutions at all levels. (JD)

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FOUR ISSUES IN TEACHER INSERVICE EDUCATION

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In the 18th Century, Bernard Bailyn put before an emergent educational community what he called an essay on hypothetical history, Education in the Forming of American Society.(1) His major thesis related to the necessity of transmitting a culture to an expanding society where land was in abundance and labor at a premium, and to a recognition of the radical transformation that American society had undergone since colonial times. I submit that the changes confronting contemporary American education are issues that are radically more critical than those of the Bailyn era, but issues that have the human resources, the knowledge bases, and the technological resources that were denied to our forebearers. Our society is no longer the melting pot. Today we have a society which highly visible and increasingly articulate minorities have transformed into a multicultural and even a global community. Labor is no longer a scarcity and the challenge today is the redeployment of our multi-faceted educational resources into a totally responsive system. And finally, there can be no doubt that American education--the whole gamut of the profession from early childhood instruction to graduate education has been shaken by profound changes. New demands have impacted the system, not one by one or in orderly fashion, but all at once. The challenges mandate a redress that strikes at the structural mainstay of the total educational profession.

Outstanding among these issues is inservice teacher education. Any attempt to deal with the problem must recognize that the focus on the teaching profession and its continued development rests on two

important premises. The first is the public demand for better and more relevant education for children and for constituents at all levels. The second is the current economic pressures that are impacting American education coupled with the demand for fiscal accountability. Nevertheless, it is the profound concern and even bias of this paper which addresses the problem of continuous development of a profession as including teachers at all levels, preservice and inservice, early childhood teachers and graduate professors.

Focusing on four selected issues, this paper has as its initial consideration the state of the profession in terms of both human resources and fiscal realities. The second section includes policy viewpoint proposed by relevant institutions and organizations. The third section is an overview of the predominant issues of inservice education that have been singled out by articulate spokesmen, either singly or under sponsorship of comparatively broad based agencies, such, for example, as National Teacher Corps. The final section highlights some statewide efforts, some legal models and legislative precedents. The conclusion will essentially be a call to action.

The oft quoted contemporary debates of the 70s vis a vis the educational scene emanate from the following facts. The cost of schooling in our nation increased from $18 billion in 1960 to $75.1 billion in 1976 (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1976).(2) David Florio and Robert Koff (1976) make several points in discussing the issue: (1) 80-90 percent of these costs are tied to salaries, i.e., human resource investment, (2) relatively little is

invested in continuous maintenance or improvement of these human resources (in education), and (3) other social systems, both public and private, provide pertinent examples of support for continuing education, i.e., IBM, the military, public health and agriculture.(3) In a comprehensive series of reports coming out of the Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching dealing with inservice education--a project coordinated by Bruce Joyce (1976)--the following statistics are reported: "Thirty years ago, nearly half of all teachers in service did not have bachelor's degrees, whereas today many have master's degrees or the equivalent, and some even have doctorates."(4) Again, the NCES reports that by 1980, only one out of every two preservice teachers will find employment and that those that are currently in the field will be inclined to remain longer.(5) This increasing longevity in the system of credentialed educators must be balanced against the public outcry for change as is evidenced in a recent New York Times article, "New York State Parent Teachers Opposition to Teacher Tenure," and their recommendation of substituting five-year renewable contracts for the teacher tenure system. They also advocated parent representatives in contract negotiations.(6) Other indications of pressures on the profession come from the admission of minorities and women, plus the growing size of the group of itinerant young faculty members excluded by high tenure ratios at colleges and universities. Thus, while the discussion will revolve about the issue of updating a profession, the reality of the excluded must be recognized as an external but very real factor.

The term inservice education has been generally recognized as being the appropriate designation for the updating of the profession.

Although much discussion and even entire sessions at conferences have been given to defining the term, specific approaches to definition of inservice education will be considered in this paper as endemic to the interests of those whose positions are reviewed. Prior to scrutinizing issues internal to the inservice process and proposed programs, it is important to look at the politics of inservice education and the stances for governance assumed by a variety of professional groups.

The reports of the Rand Corporation's study of the United States Office of Education supported change-agent programs were published in April, 1975. Among a number of significant reports, a paper by Dale Mann(7) analyzed the characteristics of most successful and least successful federal projects from a political point of view. According to Mann, successful training projects had revolutionary change goals, a committed continuous project staff management, support from central and school administration and was presented on-site encouraging participants to develop, implement and evaluate originally created materials. Not without some cynicism regarding the impact of short term projects, Mann points out the phenomenon of thinking out of the project goals and a general regression to the mean, as projects reached the dissemination phase.

Another report which has political implications for inservice teacher education was the document produced by the New York State Regents appointed Task Force on Teacher Education and Certification.(8) The highly controversial recommendations of the task force included defining teaching legally as a profession, and the proposed establishment of a Professional Practices Board. It made recommendations regarding

licensure and the continued requirement of registration and approval of teacher education programs with the Board of Regents. Most relevant to the current discussion, the Task Force recommended "that inservice education be an integral component of the teacher education system."

Perhaps the broadest political perspective of inservice education in New York State can be gained by comparing policy position papers drafted by individual members of a planning group in the Spring of 1977. The occasion was the first New York State Invitational Conference on Inservice Education. Responding to eleven substantive questions, eight quite diverse organizations presented policy papers (some in draft form) highly indicative of their representative constituencies. Rather than reducing the findings to a bland summary on a continuum over each of the questions, a selective sampling characteristic of a specific organization will provide a more accurate flavor of the individual policy positions. It would be appropriate to point out that the subsequent definition of what constituted inservice education was considerably influenced by the specific bias of these policy statements.

The report presented in draft form by the teacher's professional organization, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) emphasized that inservice education should be centered on the self-perceived needs of teachers; considered mandates antithetical to professional growth; and rejected the use of negative incentives i.e., a relationship between inservice and licensure. Not unexpectedly, the NYSUT Report stated, "Teachers must be represented through their local bargaining agent." (9) Finally, this organization recommended the implementation of the Professional Practices Board by the State.

The New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers proposed that inservice education be required for beginning, newly hired, and returning teachers, and for those whom employers perceived retraining as a need. The parents group exhibited particular concern that inservice teacher education never interrupt student routine or services to children, be funded by the state, and be job-related only. The document, Inservicc Education: A Position Paper, presented by the New York State Council of School District Administrators, emphasized that inservice is a function of the local district controlled and complemented by the Board of Education to satisfy the needs of that district. On the other hand, it is entirely consonant with policy that the New York State School Association accepted the definition of inservice developed by Robert W. Howsam that "inservice education is a term that ought to be used only in connection with the activities which school districts conduct in order to train the teachers whom they employ in the particular mode of education which they choose to use."(10)

The New York Educators Association called for teachers as the primary decision-makers in all matters dealing with inservice education for teachers and presented statistics documenting the stabilization process and the need to get on with the job. The policy of the New York Educators Association called for regionalization and envisioned the establishment of Inservice Policy Boards. Finally they openly called for the allocation of "new money," although similar fundings might be more or less implied in most of the other documents. The Confederated Organizations for Teacher Education (COTE) in their document, "Perspectives on Inservice Education," represented the role of higher

education. They emphasized a clear distinction (not separation) between inservice education and certification. Since the primary focus of COTE is preservice and inservice teacher education, the organization emphasized that "higher education must play a dominant role on any governance board for inservice education."(11) One particularly relevant recommendation was a specific dollar amount, ten dollars of State Aid money per FTE student at the local district level, and fifteen percent of all Bundy or current budget monies for faculty development at higher education levels.

Probably one of the most direct and hard-nosed positions was that presented by the New York State Council of AFSA Locals. After initially distinguishing between job-related opportunities and professionally related aspects, it clarified the role of the State Education Department. It advocated that inservice programs should be ongoing and continuous, rather than optional after tenure has been rewarded or the last salary step obtained."(12) In addition it held that "inservice education has been the traditional province of the university, which is still the most adequately prepared institution for this purpose."(13) The series of policy papers as a whole presented some consensus and some conflicting perceptions of roles on governance and on other issues. Admittedly, the policy positions cited were related to a single State, New York. They are indicative, however, of the vested interests that are factors in governance. Evidently, some effective interaction must occur to reconcile these positions before inservice education can become an established practice for teachers and other educators.

The third section looks to the mode of the delivery system for inservice education. Some national leadership and some highly articulate spokesmen immediately ome to mind. National Teacher Corps has stimulated discussions through conferences that are national and others that focus on the State. Under funding from the United States Office of Education, the National Council of States on Inservice Education was created "to provide a way for states to examine, discuss and disseminate information about inservice goals."(14) Both of these federal efforts have been catalystic agents in bringing together the most articulate spokesmen and stimulating discussions of the most pertinent issues which are endemic to inservice education. Under the collaborative sponsorship of the National Center for Educational Statistics and Teacher Corps has emerged the Inservice Teacher Education (ISTE) Concepts Project coordinated by Bruce Joyce. The series of five reports is based on the analysis of interviews with over one thousand educational professionals and more than two hundred policy makers at the state and national levels. According to the proposers of the ISTE system, four major dimensions contribute to the operating structure of inservice education. These four structures are: (1) the Governance System, (2) the Substantive System, (3) the Delivery System, and (4) the Modal System.(15) The governance and decision-making structure adopted will undoubtedly determine to a large extent the content and processes of the other systems. Although its critical influence on inservice education is not to be minimized, these policy positions from a number of representative groups have already been discussed.

Directing attention then to questions of content, the substantive area, and the process, the delivery system, we are confronted with

other problems. Quoting the Stanford researchers, "There are two structural problems with ISTE. First, the vast variety of possible training options need to be interfaced closely with teacher needs and the general thrusts of school districts. . . . Second, the vast problems of time in which to be trained and providing training close to the work site have obviously not been solved at all."(16) Before turning to suggested approaches and proposed strategies, some feedback on teacher perception of the need for inservice education would be appropriate. Teachers in the field selected professional growth as the prime motivator for seeking inservice training.(17) In a State survey in Texas, conducted by Robert Houston (1976), some 300 teachers and teacher educators singled out six competencies from a list of twenty-three as being perceived as needs. Both preservice and inservice Teachers specified building trust relationships, as well as communication, involvement, or interpersonal skills with students, colleagues, and school constituencies in line with their personal and the school's philosophy. Both groups also requested assistance in developing effective techniques for classroom management. It is perhaps significant that preservice teachers requested assistance in strengthening their understanding of basic concepts and theories of the subjects they teach. More experienced teachers on the other hand rated among their five top priorities, assistance and encouragement of teachers who have personal problems that affect their teaching effectiveness.(18) These teacher perceptions would be consistent with the four approaches suggested by Joyce--(1) social interaction, (2) information processing, (3) personalistic, and (4) behavioral

modification.[19] It can be remarked that while both the beginning and experienced teachers emphasized social interaction and personalistic processes, the younger teachers sought informational skills and the more experienced group selected behavioral modification approaches. Finally, there has been some degree of consensus by both policy and theoretical groups that inservice education should be job-related teacher development, while personal advancement in education should be sought on an individual basis.

The mode of delivery for inservice education, although differing in a number of substantive ways, has relatively stable agreement among the various constituencies on several dimensions. Inservice education must be school-oriented, presented on-site at convenient times, and be on-going and continuous and not a one-shot effort. A body of accumulated research evidence (Berman & McLaughlin, 1975; Pullam & Pomfort, 1976; Sarason, 1973; Schnuck, Punket, Arends. & Arends, 1977; Smith & Keith, 1971) clearly articulate this position. "Instead of trying to improve isolated components, inservice must aim toward helping people in schools come together and practice effective arrangements for carrying out work in line with the common mission."[20] The delivery system for inservice education involves the process of mutual adaptation and according to David Hunt of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education "the need for inservice agents to "flex" or be reflexive and responsive to each other during the inservice process."[21]

The plethora of proposed models for the delivery mode almost all imply the need for substantial changes throughout the educational system. The involvement of faculty members from institutions of

higher education on an extended basis immediately proposes questions of faculty retraining, rethinking the tenure and promotion criteria, and a basic change in life-style for many faculty members. The model proposed by Houston focuses on the creation of a new intermediary ombudsman, the school-based teacher educator (SBTE).[22] Moreover, the in-house use of highly qualified school district personnel with new role functions cannot be lightly dismissed particularly in view of the proposed regulations for the Teacher Center legislation. In the end, the actualization and implementation of the inservice education processes may include all of the above.

The final imperative for change might well be in the legislative arena. The impetus from both federal and state levels has been in the direction of planning and collaborative efforts in planning. Such mandates first appeared with the Educational Amendments of 1972 in Title XII, the planning for the State Postsecondary Planning Commissions. P.L. 94.142 passed in November, 1975 mandates a State plan for each of the States for the Education of the Handicapped. The recent authorization by the Department of Labor under the Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects allocates approximately one-fifth of comparatively substantial funding for the involvement of the educational system and calls for: ". . . cooperative arrangements with educational agencies at all levels."[23] At the State level, several States (e.g., Colorado, Minnesota, Connecticut, California, et al.) have recently passed or are considering passing continuing education legislation. The Illinois Policy Project Task Force on Continuing Education has reviewed the issues of categorical aid vs. general aid, looked at legal precedents and designed exemplary

model legislation. This model is broadly conceived and should receive serious consideration, support, and even a lobbying effort from those concerned with inservice education.

Perhaps this paper has been overly broad in covering the issues, yet there are indeed some significant proposals and programs that were not able to be included due to the constraints of space. In spite of this admitted deficiency, there are some blatantly obvious premises that can be defended. Inservice education has become one of the major educational priorities of the 80s. All levels of the educational community will be impacted by the issue and must be involved in addressing the issue. Impetus provided by federal and state legislation is urging the change process. In face of these facts, it is imperative that the total educational community assume the leadership in deciding how educational change will arrive at the schools, colleges, and universities. There are problems to be resolved in shared governance, there are problems of funding, there are issues at the substantive and delivery systems levels together with the mode of delivery. We have within our grasp substantial research, position papers, proposed programs, and from Illinois a model for needed legislation.(24) The times call for decisive action, based on collaborative resolutions, that will bring American education into relevance for contemporary American children, educators, and society as a whole.

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